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TRANSMITTAL OF APPEAL BRIEF (Large Entity)

Docket No.
YOR920000552US1

Re Application Of: Mantena et al.

Application No.	Filing Date	Examiner	Customer No.	Group Art Unit	Confirmation No.
09/752,330	12/29/2000	Haq, Naeem U.	46843	3625	861

Invention: METHOD, SYSTEM AND PROGRAM PRODUCT FOR PROVIDING AN ENTITLED PRICE IN AN ELECTRONIC TRANSACTION

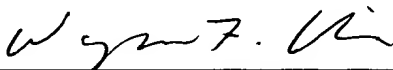
COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS:

Transmitted herewith is the Appeal Brief in this application, with respect to the Notice of Appeal filed on:
April 17, 2006

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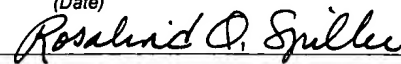

Signature

Dated: June 19, 2006

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Rosalind Q. Spiller

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YOR920000552US1

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Appellants: Mantena et al. Confirmation No.: 8671
Serial No.: 09/752,330 Group Art Unit: 3625
Filed: 12/29/2000 Examiner: Haq, Naeem U.
Title: METHOD, SYSTEM AND PROGRAM PRODUCT FOR PROVIDING AN
ENTITLED PRICE IN AN ELECTRONIC TRANSACTION

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Appeal Briefs – Patents, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on June 19, 2006.


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Date of Signature: June 19, 2006.

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Dear Sir:

APPELLANTS' APPEAL BRIEF TO THE BOARD OF
PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

This is an appeal under 37 C.F.R. §1.191 and §1.192 from a Final Rejection, mailed on January 17, 2006, of claims 1-48, comprising all the claims finally rejected. A Notice of Appeal was timely filed on April 17, 2006, and received in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on April 17, 2006, with an Appeal Brief due June 17, 2006 (June 17, 2006 fell on a Saturday), in

light of the pre-appeal procedure. Therefore, this Brief is being timely filed. A Transmittal of Appeal Brief is included herewith authorizing the Commissioner to charge the fee for filing this Appeal Brief in the amount of \$500 as set forth in 37 C.F.R. §1.17(f).

REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

International Business Machines Corporation, the sole assignee of the inventors' rights in this patent application, is the real party in interest.

RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

A related case, U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/751,069 is currently under appeal, however, no Brief has been filed yet, nor has any decision been rendered. Otherwise, to the knowledge of Appellants, Appellants' undersigned legal representative, or the assignee, there are no other appeals or interferences which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in this appeal.

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-36 were originally presented in the subject application. Claims 1, 13 and 25 were amended in an Amendment and Response to Office Action dated June 4, 2004. Claims 37-48 were added in an Amendment and Response to Final Office Action dated November 5, 2004. Claims 1, 13, 25 and 37 were amended in an Amendment dated October 27, 2005.

Therefore, claims 1-48 remain in this case, of which all stand rejected on the grounds detailed below.

STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

No amendment was filed subsequent to final rejection.

SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER

Claim 1

Claim 1 recites a method of providing an entitled price in an electronic transaction. The method comprises electronically sending by a requestor (e.g., via browser 204, FIG. 2) a request for an entitled price based on a preexisting entitlement (see the following paragraph) from a public electronic environment (e.g., global computer network 210, FIG. 2).

On page 2 of the present application, at lines 12-16, the definition of “entitled price” is given as:

Such negotiated prices are referred to herein as the “entitled price,” which is the price a buyer is entitled to for a given item based on an entitlement, such as, for example, a contract with the seller or a promotional offer from the seller (e.g., a coupon) or a program with a business partner of the seller (e.g., “point” programs similar to airline mileage programs).

In addition, page 8, lines 21-23 of the application provides a further example of a discount contract.

Consistent with the definition for “entitled price” given in the present application, Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines “entitlement,” in relevant part, as “a right to benefits specified esp. by law or contract.” In two of the examples given, the entitlement is created by some sort of agreement with the seller, a contract being the easiest example. In the case of an offer (e.g., a coupon), acceptance creates an agreement, for example, presenting a coupon. Coupled with “preexisting,” then, the term “preexisting entitlement” simply means a previously existing right, in this case, a right to an entitled price through agreement.

Continuing with claim 1, the method further comprises automatically routing the request to a private electronic environment (e.g., private computer network 238, FIG. 2). See, e.g., page 8, lines 8-23 of the specification. The method further comprises obtaining the entitled price within the private electronic environment in real time while the requestor waits. See page 3, lines 23-24, and see page 9, line 10 through page 10, line 27 of the application, describing an example of the request making its way through the private electronic environment (including messaging middleware 212, FIG. 2) for calculation of the entitled price by ERP application 216. Still further, the method comprises automatically returning the entitled price from the private electronic environment to the public electronic environment for providing to the requestor. See the specification at page 11, lines 1-16.

Claim 10

Claim 10 recites that the electronic transaction takes place at least partially over the global computer network. See FIG. 1 connection 106, and the specification at page 5, line 13 to

page 6, line 18. The electronically sending comprises electronically sending the request from the browser to a global computer network site server. A user sends a request via browser 204 running on computing unit 202 over global computer network 210 to commerce site 208 running on server 206. See FIG. 2 and the specification at page 8, lines 16-19. Claim 10 further recites that the automatically routing comprises: forwarding the request from the global computer network site server to messaging middleware (elements 212, FIG. 2; see specification at page 7, lines 1-16); sending the request from the messaging middleware to the ERP application; and causing by the messaging middleware a command to be issued to the ERP application.

Messaging client 218 routes the request to private electronic environment 238. Messaging client 218 connects to messaging server 220 over a standard connection 240, then sends the request to the messaging server with an identification of second messaging server 222. The request is temporarily placed in transmission queue 226 of messaging server 220, then transmitted over open channel 242 (a standard connection monitored and controlled by channel software on messaging server 222) across firewall 230 to second messaging server 222. Once received, the request is placed in holding queue 232 of the second messaging server. See the specification at page 9, line 12 to page 10, line 5. Placing the request in holding queue 232 of second messaging server 222 in some manner results in messaging client 224 being woken up. Module 236 then issues a command to ERP application 216 over standard connection 246 to calculate the entitled price. The ERP application then calculates the price, including accessing database 217 to determine the entitlement. In one example, the requestor is identified, and the entitlement is determined based on the requestor. See the specification at page 10, lines 6-20.

Claim 13

Claim 13 recites a system for providing an entitled price in an electronic transaction. One example of such a system is shown in FIG. 2, and generally described in the specification as filed at page 6, line 19 through page 8, line 14. The system comprises means for electronically sending by a requestor a request for an entitled price based on a preexisting entitlement from a public electronic environment. A user sends a request via browser 204 running on computing unit 202 over global computer network 210 to commerce site 208 running on server 206. See the specification at page 8, lines 16-19. The system also comprises means for automatically routing the request to a private electronic environment. Messaging client 218 routes the request to private electronic environment 238. Messaging client 218 connects to messaging server 220 over a standard connection 240, then sends the request to the messaging server with an identification of second messaging server 222. The request is temporarily placed in transmission queue 226 of messaging server 220, then transmitted over open channel 242 (a standard connection monitored and controlled by channel software on messaging server 222) across firewall 230 to second messaging server 222. Once received, the request is placed in holding queue 232 of the second messaging server. See the specification at page 9, line 12 to page 10, line 5. The system further comprises means for obtaining the entitled price within the private electronic environment in real time while the requestor waits. Placing the request in holding queue 232 of second messaging server 222 in some manner results in messaging client 224 being woken up. Module 236 then issues a command to ERP application 216 over standard connection 246 to calculate the entitled price. The ERP application then calculates the price, including

accessing database 217 to determine the entitlement. In one example, the requestor is identified, and the entitlement is determined based on the requestor. See the specification at page 10, lines 6-20. Still further, the system comprises means for automatically returning the entitled price from the private electronic environment to the public electronic environment for providing to the requestor. As shown in FIG. 2 and described in the specification at page 11, lines 1-16, the entitled price is returned over standard connections 248 and 250, to messaging server 222, which places it in reply queue 234. The reply queue points to messaging server 220, so the reply is transferred over open channel 252 to messaging server 220, which places the reply in local queue 228. When messaging client 218 detects data in local queue, it retrieves the reply over standard connection 254. Commerce site 208 then returns the reply to browser 204 for display over global computer network 210.

Claim 25

Claim 25 recites at least one program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying at least one program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method of providing an entitled price in an electronic transaction. See the application at page 12, lines 24-27. The method comprises electronically sending by a requestor (e.g., via browser 204, FIG. 2) a request for an entitled price based on a preexisting entitlement (see the following paragraph) from a public electronic environment (e.g., global computer network 210, FIG. 2).

On page 2 of the present application, at lines 12-16, the definition of "entitled price" is given as:

Such negotiated prices are referred to herein as the “entitled price,” which is the price a buyer is entitled to for a given item based on an entitlement, such as, for example, a contract with the seller or a promotional offer from the seller (e.g., a coupon) or a program with a business partner of the seller (e.g., “point” programs similar to airline mileage programs).

In addition, page 8, lines 21-23 of the application provides a further example of a discount contract.

Consistent with the definition for “entitled price” given in the present application, Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines “entitlement,” in relevant part, as “a right to benefits specified esp. by law or contract.” In two of the examples given, the entitlement is created by some sort of agreement with the seller, a contract being the easiest example. In the case of an offer (e.g., a coupon), acceptance creates an agreement, for example, presenting a coupon. Coupled with “preexisting,” then, the term “preexisting entitlement” simply means a previously existing right, in this case, a right to an entitled price through agreement.

Continuing with claim 25, the method further comprises automatically routing the request to a private electronic environment (e.g., private computer network 238, FIG. 2). See, e.g., page 8, lines 8-23 of the specification. The method further comprises obtaining the entitled price within the private electronic environment in real time while the requestor waits. See page 3, lines 23-24, and see page 9, line 10 through page 10, line 27 of the application, describing an example of the request making its way through the private electronic environment (including messaging middleware 212, FIG. 2) for calculation of the entitled price by ERP application 216. Still further, the method comprises automatically returning the entitled price from the private

electronic environment to the public electronic environment for providing to the requestor. See the specification at page 11, lines 1-16.

Claim 37

Claim 37 recites a method for providing a computing infrastructure, comprising integrating computer-readable code into a computing system. See the present application at, for example, page 12, lines 14-15. The computer-readable code in combination with the computing system is capable of performing a method of providing an entitled price in an electronic transaction. The method comprises electronically sending by a requestor (e.g., via browser 204, FIG. 2) a request for an entitled price based on a preexisting entitlement (see the following paragraph) from a public electronic environment (e.g., global computer network 210, FIG. 2).

On page 2 of the present application, at lines 12-16, the definition of “entitled price” is given as:

Such negotiated prices are referred to herein as the “entitled price,” which is the price a buyer is entitled to for a given item based on an entitlement, such as, for example, a contract with the seller or a promotional offer from the seller (e.g., a coupon) or a program with a business partner of the seller (e.g., “point” programs similar to airline mileage programs).

In addition, page 8, lines 21-23 of the application provides a further example of a discount contract.

Consistent with the definition for “entitled price” given in the present application, Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines “entitlement,” in relevant part, as “a right to

benefits specified esp. by law or contract.” In two of the examples given, the entitlement is created by some sort of agreement with the seller, a contract being the easiest example. In the case of an offer (e.g., a coupon), acceptance creates an agreement, for example, presenting a coupon. Coupled with “preexisting,” then, the term “preexisting entitlement” simply means a previously existing right, in this case, a right to an entitled price through agreement.

Continuing with claim 37, the method further comprises automatically routing the request to a private electronic environment (e.g., private computer network 238, FIG. 2). See, e.g., page 8, lines 8-23 of the specification. The method further comprises obtaining the entitled price within the private electronic environment in real time while the requestor waits. See page 3, lines 23-24, and see page 9, line 10 through page 10, line 27 of the application, describing an example of the request making its way through the private electronic environment (including messaging middleware 212, FIG. 2) for calculation of the entitled price by ERP application 216. Still further, the method comprises automatically returning the entitled price from the private electronic environment to the public electronic environment for providing to the requestor. See the specification at page 11, lines 1-16.

GROUND OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL

1. Claims 1-48 were provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting, as allegedly unpatentable over claims 1-45 of co-pending U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/751,078 (Publication No. US 2002/0087477 A1).

2. The final Office Action rejected claims 1-48 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject invention.

3. The final Office Action rejected claims 1-3, 9-11, 13-15, 21-23, 25-27, 33-35, 37-39 and 45-47 under 35 U.S.C. §103, as allegedly obvious over Lidow (U.S. Patent No. 6,889,197).

ARGUMENT

Double Patenting

The cited U.S. patent application issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,999,949 on February 14, 2006 with claims 1-48 (hereinafter, "the '949 Patent"). Appellants respectfully, but most strenuously, traverse the double-patenting rejection for the reasons details below.

The final Office Action alleges that the differences between the present claims and those of the '949 Patent amount to non-functional descriptive material, citing *In re Gulack* and *In re Lowry*. However, *In re Gulack* is a printed matter case and inapplicable outside that area, as confirmed by *In re Lowry*. In addition, *In re Lowry* concerns a data structure, which is not present in this case. Thus, Appellants submit that *In re Lowry* is inapplicable as well. Appellants submit the final Office Action allegation amounts to improperly ignoring claim limitations.

In addition, Appellants submit that the present claims are not obvious over the issued claims of the '949 Patent. For example, the present claims recite a request for an entitled price, whereas the '949 Patent recites a sales order. One is merely an inquiry, while the other is an order. As another example, the present application recites obtaining the entitled price in real time, whereas the '949 Patent does not.

Moreover, *In re Gulack* specifically stands for the proposition that printed matter case law is inapplicable to computer-based inventions, overturning a rejection of a data structure claim that had been upheld by the Board on printed matter grounds. Thus, within the case law itself cited in the final Office Action is the clear direction that printed matter rejections are not to be used in cases such as the present application. "Printed matter" in the final Office Action is disguised in the form of "nonfunctional descriptive material" allegations.

Therefore, Appellants submit that the basis for the rejection is improper and respectfully request that the double patenting rejection be overturned.

35 U.S.C. §112 Rejection

The final Office Action alleged that it is unclear what the limitation "preexisting entitlement" means. Appellants respectfully, but most strenuously, traverse this rejection for the reasons detailed below.

On page 2 of the present application, at lines 12-16, the definition of "entitled price" is given as:

Such negotiated prices are referred to herein as the “entitled price,” which is the price a buyer is entitled to for a given item based on an entitlement, such as, for example, a contract with the seller or a promotional offer from the seller (e.g., a coupon) or a program with a business partner of the seller (e.g., “point” programs similar to airline mileage programs).

In addition, page 8, lines 21-23 of the application provides a further example of a discount contract.

Consistent with the definition for “entitled price” given in the present application, Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines “entitlement,” in relevant part, as “a right to benefits specified esp. by law or contract.” In two of the examples given, the entitlement is created by some sort of agreement with the seller, a contract being the easiest example. In the case of an offer (e.g., a coupon), acceptance creates an agreement, for example, presenting a coupon. Coupled with “preexisting,” then, the term “preexisting entitlement” simply means a previously existing right, in this case, a right to an entitled price through agreement.

Therefore, Appellants submit that the meaning of “preexisting entitlement” is sufficiently clear from the specification.

35 U.S.C. §103 Rejection

Claim 1 recites a method of providing an entitled price in an electronic transaction. The method comprises electronically sending by a requestor a request for an entitled price based on a preexisting entitlement from a public electronic environment, automatically routing the request to a private electronic environment, obtaining the entitled price within the private electronic

environment in real time while the requestor waits, and automatically returning the entitled price from the private electronic environment to the public electronic environment for providing to the requestor.

Against the aspect of obtaining the entitled price within the private electronic environment in real time while the requestor waits, the final Office Action first cites to Lidow at column 23, line 64 to column 24, line 7, and FIG. 17, reference numerals 74 and 266. However, this first cited section of Lidow describes what costs go into the eventually calculated price. As show in FIG. 17 and described at column 23, lines 43-46 of Lidow, pricing is calculated after delivery to the customer. Thus, Appellants submit that the price is not obtained in real time while the customer waits.

The final Office Action also cites to Lidow at FIG. 24, reference numeral 74, and column 27, lines 43-55. This second cited section of Lidow describes the ERP system in general terms, and indicates that employees of the server (i.e., employees of the company accessing the server) have real-time access to enterprise information. However, there is no teaching therein regarding access from outside the company, i.e., from outside the private electronic environment. Appellants submit that obtaining an entitled price in real time for a waiting requestor based in a public electronic environment, i.e., external access, is simply different from internal company access by employees in real time.

With regard to the claimed "entitled price," the Office Action admits that "Lidow does not teach that the information requested is an entitled price." See the final Office Action at

page 5. Nonetheless, the final Office Action alleges that the entitled price is “nonfunctional descriptive material,” citing *In re Gulack* and *In re Lowry*.

As stated previously and confirmed by *In re Lowry*, the citation of *In re Gulack* is misplaced, since that is a printed matter case. However, the final Office Action continues to cite *In re Lowry*. Appellants submit that *In re Lowry* involves a data structure, which the present invention does not involve. As such, Appellants submit it is distinguishable on that point alone. Moreover, Appellants respectfully point out they are not claiming requesting, obtaining and returning just any information, but specifically an entitled price. The steps are all centered around this specific data. The invention is not, as alleged in the final Office Action, the sending, routing, obtaining and returning, but only when the information sought is an entitled price. Indeed, as set forth in the background, getting such information from private to public electronic environments on request is the problem sought to be solved. As such, Appellants submit it is not nonfunctional descriptive material and cannot be ignored.

Therefore, since Lidow fails to teach or suggest at least (1) obtaining the entitled price within a private electronic environment in real time for a waiting requestor in a public electronic environment, and (2) an entitled price, Appellants submit that claim 1 cannot be rendered obvious over Lidow.

Claims 13, 25 and 37 contain limitations similar to those noted above with respect to claim 1. Thus, Appellants submit the remarks made above regarding claim 1 are equally

applicable to those claims. Therefore, Appellants submit none of claims 13, 25 or 37 can be made obvious over Lidow.

Appellants submit that the dependent claims are allowable for the same reasons as the independent claims from which they directly or ultimately depend, as well as for their additional limitations.

For example, claim 10 recites, among other things, messaging middleware causing a command to be issued to the ERP application. As best Appellants can tell, the final Office Action does not directly address claim 10. However, against the recitation of messaging middleware generally, the final Office Action cites to Lidow at column 27, lines 56-67. This section, however, fails to teach anything regarding the messaging services section issuing a command to any component of the system, let alone specifically to the ERP application.

Therefore, Appellants submit that claim 10 cannot be rendered obvious over Lidow.

Claims 22, 34 and 46 contain limitations similar to that noted above with respect to claim 10. Thus, Appellants submit the remarks made above regarding claim 10 are equally applicable to those claims. Therefore, Appellants submit none of claims 22, 34 or 46 can be made obvious over Lidow.

Finally, Appellants expressly maintain their right to subsequently challenge the proper citation of Lidow against the present application, because it is unclear whether the Lidow claim back to U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/175,868 is even proper. This priority claim

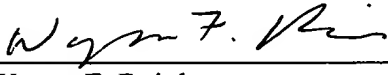
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appears to be the only basis upon which Lidow could be cited, since it is the only date in the chain that predates the filing date of the present application.

In conclusion, Appellants submit that there is no double patenting, that the term "preexisting entitlement" is sufficiently clear from the specification, and that the claims are not obvious over Lidow. Therefore, Appellants submit that the final Office Action should be reversed in all respects.



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Dated: June 19, 2006.

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CLAIMS APPENDIX

1. (Previously Presented) A method of providing an entitled price in an electronic transaction, comprising:

electronically sending by a requestor a request for an entitled price based on a preexisting entitlement from a public electronic environment;

automatically routing the request to a private electronic environment;

obtaining the entitled price within the private electronic environment in real time while the requestor waits; and

automatically returning the entitled price from the private electronic environment to the public electronic environment for providing to the requestor.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the public electronic environment comprises a front end application, wherein the private electronic environment comprises a back end Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) application, wherein the electronically sending comprises electronically sending by the requestor the request via the front end application, wherein the automatically routing comprises automatically routing the request to the ERP application, wherein the obtaining comprises obtaining the entitled price from the ERP application while the requestor waits, and wherein the automatically returning comprises automatically returning the entitled price from the ERP application to the front end application for providing to the requestor.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the automatically routing and the automatically returning are accomplished at least in part by messaging middleware.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the messaging middleware comprises MQSERIES and the ERP application comprises SAP.
5. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the messaging middleware comprises MQSERIES.
6. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the messaging middleware comprises MSMQ.
7. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the ERP application comprises SAP.
8. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the ERP application comprises BAAN.
9. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the public electronic environment comprises a global computer network, and wherein the front end application comprises a browser.
10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the electronic transaction takes place at least partially over the global computer network, wherein the electronically sending comprises electronically sending the request from the browser to a global computer network site server, and wherein the automatically routing comprises:
 - forwarding the request from the global computer network site server to messaging middleware;
 - sending the request from the messaging middleware to the ERP application; and
 - causing by the messaging middleware a command to be issued to the ERP application.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein the automatically returning comprises:

sending the entitled price from the ERP application to the messaging middleware;

forwarding the entitled price from the messaging middleware to the global computer network site server; and

returning the entitled price from the global computer network site server to the browser.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, further comprising encrypting and decrypting communications between the browser and the global computer network site server, and between the global computer network site server and the messaging middleware.

13. (Previously Presented) A system for providing an entitled price in an electronic transaction, comprising:

means for electronically sending by a requestor a request for an entitled price based on a preexisting entitlement from a public electronic environment;

means for automatically routing the request to a private electronic environment;

means for obtaining the entitled price within the private electronic environment in real time while the requestor waits; and

means for automatically returning the entitled price from the private electronic environment to the public electronic environment for providing to the requestor.

14. (Original) The system of claim 13, wherein the public electronic environment comprises a front end application, wherein the private electronic environment comprises a back end Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) application, wherein the means for electronically sending comprises means for electronically sending by the requestor the request via the front end application, wherein the means for automatically routing comprises means for automatically routing the request to the ERP application, wherein the means for obtaining comprises means for obtaining the entitled price from the ERP application while the requestor waits, and wherein the means for automatically returning comprises means for automatically returning the entitled price from the ERP application to the front end application for providing to the requestor.

15. (Original) The system of claim 14, wherein the means for automatically routing and the means for automatically returning comprise messaging middleware.

16. (Original) The system of claim 15, wherein the messaging middleware comprises MQSERIES and the ERP application comprises SAP.

17. (Original) The system of claim 15, wherein the messaging middleware comprises MQSERIES.

18. (Original) The system of claim 15, wherein the messaging middleware comprises MSMQ.

19. (Original) The system of claim 14, wherein the ERP application comprises SAP.

20. (Original) The system of claim 14, wherein the ERP application comprises BAAN.

21. (Original) The system of claim 14, wherein the public electronic environment comprises a global computer network, and wherein the front end application comprises a browser.

22. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the electronic transaction takes place at least partially over the global computer network, wherein the means for electronically sending comprises means for electronically sending the request from the browser to a global computer network site server, and wherein the means for automatically routing comprises:

means for forwarding the request from the global computer network site server to messaging middleware;

means for sending the request from the messaging middleware to the ERP application; and

means for causing by the messaging middleware a command to be issued to the ERP application.

23. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein the means for automatically returning comprises:

means for sending the entitled price from the ERP application to the messaging middleware;

means for forwarding the entitled price from the messaging middleware to the global computer network site server; and

means for returning the entitled price from the global computer network site server to the browser.

24. (Original) The system of claim 23, further comprising:

means for encrypting and decrypting communications between the browser and the global computer network site server; and

means for encrypting and decrypting communications between the global computer network site server and the messaging middleware.

25. (Previously Presented) At least one program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying at least one program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method of providing an entitled price in an electronic transaction, comprising:

electronically sending by a requestor a request for an entitled price based on a preexisting entitlement from a public electronic environment;

automatically routing the request to a private electronic environment;

obtaining the entitled price within the private electronic environment in real time while the requestor waits; and

automatically returning the entitled price from the private electronic environment to the public electronic environment for providing to the requestor.

26. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 25, wherein the public electronic environment comprises a front end application, wherein the private electronic environment comprises a back end Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) application, wherein the electronically sending comprises electronically sending by the requestor the request via the front end application, wherein the automatically routing comprises automatically routing the request to the ERP application, wherein the obtaining comprises obtaining the entitled price from the ERP application while the requestor waits, and wherein the automatically returning comprises automatically returning the entitled price from the ERP application to the front end application for providing to the requestor.

27. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 25, wherein the automatically routing and the automatically returning are accomplished at least in part by messaging middleware.

28. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 27, wherein the messaging middleware comprises MQSERIES and the ERP application comprises SAP.

29. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 27, wherein the messaging middleware comprises MQSERIES.

30. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 27, wherein the messaging middleware comprises MSMQ.

31. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 25, wherein the ERP application comprises SAP.

32. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 25, wherein the ERP application comprises BAAN.

33. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 25, wherein the public electronic environment comprises a global computer network, and wherein the front end application comprises a browser.

34. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 33, wherein the electronic transaction takes place at least partially over the global computer network, wherein the electronically sending comprises electronically sending the request from the browser to a global computer network site server, and wherein the automatically routing comprises:

forwarding the request from the global computer network site server to messaging middleware;

sending the request from the messaging middleware to the ERP application; and

causing by the messaging middleware a command to be issued to the ERP application.

35. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 34, wherein the automatically returning comprises:

sending the entitled price from the ERP application to the messaging middleware;

forwarding the entitled price from the messaging middleware to the global computer network site server; and

returning the entitled price from the global computer network site server to the browser.

36. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 35, further comprising encrypting and decrypting communications between the browser and the global computer network site server, and between the global computer network site server and the messaging middleware.

37. (Previously Presented) A method for providing a computing infrastructure, comprising integrating computer-readable code into a computing system, wherein the computer-readable code in combination with the computing system is capable of performing:

electronically sending by a requestor a request for an entitled price based on a preexisting entitlement from a public electronic environment;

automatically routing the request to a private electronic environment;

obtaining the entitled price within the private electronic environment in real time while the requestor waits; and

automatically returning the entitled price from the private electronic environment to the public electronic environment for providing to the requestor.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, wherein the public electronic environment comprises a front end application, wherein the private electronic environment comprises a back end Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) application, wherein the electronically sending comprises electronically sending by the requestor the request via the front end application, wherein the automatically routing comprises automatically routing the request to the ERP application, wherein the obtaining comprises obtaining the entitled price from the ERP application while the requestor waits, and wherein the automatically returning comprises automatically returning the entitled price from the ERP application to the front end application for providing to the requestor.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38, wherein the automatically routing and the automatically returning are accomplished at least in part by messaging middleware.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein the messaging middleware comprises MQSERIES and the ERP application comprises SAP.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein the messaging middleware comprises MQSERIES.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein the messaging middleware comprises MSMQ.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38, wherein the ERP application comprises SAP.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38, wherein the ERP application comprises BAAN.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38, wherein the public electronic environment comprises a global computer network, and wherein the front end application comprises a browser.

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45, wherein the electronic transaction takes place at least partially over the global computer network, wherein the electronically sending comprises electronically sending the request from the browser to a global computer network site server, and wherein the automatically routing comprises:

forwarding the request from the global computer network site server to messaging middleware;

sending the request from the messaging middleware to the ERP application; and

causing by the messaging middleware a command to be issued to the ERP application.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 46, wherein the automatically returning comprises:

sending the entitled price from the ERP application to the messaging middleware;

forwarding the entitled price from the messaging middleware to the global computer network site server; and

returning the entitled price from the global computer network site server to the browser.

48. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 47, further comprising encrypting and decrypting communications between the browser and the global computer network site server, and between the global computer network site server and the messaging middleware.

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EVIDENCE APPENDIX

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RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX